

395  
1 November 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: International Federation for Internal Freedom (IFIF)  
ALPERT, Richard, Ph.D.  
LEARY, Timothy F., Ph.D.  
Drugs, Mind Affecting, Agency Policy Regarding

1. Reference is made to the articles (attached), "The Hallucinogenic Drug Cult," appearing in The Reporter, 15 August 1963; "The Strange Case of the Harvard Drug Scandal," appearing in the 5 November 1963 issue of Look; and, numerous other articles recently appearing in magazines and in the public press on the same subject. These articles concern the use of certain hallucinogenic drugs (particularly LSD, mescaline, peyote, and psilocybin), some mind affecting mushrooms, and others by various groups for experimental purposes, often of a quasi-religious nature.

2. In the Spring of 1963, Harvard University fired Dr. Richard ALPERT, a psychologist, from its staff for non-controlled use of the above-mentioned drugs for experimental purposes. His associate, Dr. Timothy F. LEARY, also a psychologist, left the University about the same time. These professors had been using hallucinogenic drugs in experiments involving undergraduate students and after a series of attacks by faculty and by outside sources, the University was forced to remove both of these individuals from its staff. Somewhat earlier, Drs. ALPERT and LEARY had set up an organization known as the International Federation for Internal Freedom (IFIF), which obviously was a cover for additional experimental work in the hallucinogenic drugs. After their dismissal from Harvard and the attacks on their activities by the Division of Food and Drugs of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and by the Federal Food and Drug Administration, the two doctors transferred their activities to Mexico where they claimed that they would have more

58-96

425

freedom. However, several chapters of the IFIF were organized in different parts of the United States, particularly at Los Angeles, New York City, and with the main office at Cambridge, Massachusetts. Another chapter was organized at Mexico City, Mexico.

3. SRS/OS has for a number of years been engaged with certain other Agency areas in research and operational work with some hallucinogenic drugs. This work has been under rigid Security and Agency control, and the then Director of Security, Colonel Edwards, laid down rigid instructions that these types of drugs were not to be used under any circumstances on Agency personnel. Operational use of the drugs was handled through a special committee under the specific control and only with consent of Mr. Richard Helms, DRP.

4. It should be noted that the aforementioned hallucinogenic drugs are considered by the Office of Security and by the Medical Office as extremely dangerous. Uncontrolled experimentation has in the past resulted in tragic circumstances and for this reason every effort is made to control any involvement with these drugs.

5. SRS has not been able to determine whether any staff employees of the Agency have engaged in the unauthorized taking of any of these drugs, but there is information that some non-Agency groups particularly on the West Coast, have taken these drugs in a type of religious experimentation. While as previously mentioned there are no staff employees involved, some individuals known to have taken the drugs have sensitive security clearances and are engaged in classified work.

6. Any information concerning the use of this type of drug for experimental or personal reasons should be reported immediately to Chief/SRS/OS with all specific details furnished. In addition, any information of Agency personnel involved with the International Federation for Internal Freedom, or with Drs. ALPERT or LEARY, or with any group engaging in this type of activity should also be reported.

Chief/SRS/OS